

## Steve Tyrell

### It's Magic: The Songs of Sammy Cahn

Concord Records CRE-34467-02 |

★★★★

Steve Tyrell (v), plus various personnel including Alan Broadbent (p), Bob Mann (g), David Finck (b) and Kevin Winard (d). Rec. date not stated

The spark for this songbook project from singer, songwriter and producer Steve Tyrell came when he performed the little known Sammy Cahn number 'It's Crazy' at a concert in Virginia and was taken aback by the amazing response. Celebrating the centennial birthday of one of America's greatest songsmiths, Tyrell explores 12 more of his favourite Cahn tunes, with inventive arrangements by Alan Broadbent, Don Sebesky, John Oddo and others. Songs co-written with Jimmy Van Heusen feature strongly in the collection, including opener 'Come Fly with Me' – one of countless Cahn songs recorded by Frank Sinatra that features a great solo here by the legendary Lew Soloff – the salutary tale of 'The Tender Trap', the exquisite ballad 'The Second Time Around' and the lyrical brilliance of 'Ain't That a Kick in the Head'. Tyrell also gives fine readings of two of the three Oscar-winning songs penned by Cahn and Van Heusen, 'All The Way' and 'Call Me Irresponsible'. **Peter Quinn**

## Wheelhouse

### Boss of the Plains

Aerophonics Records AR-002 | ★★★★★

Dave Rempis (bar s, as), Jason Adasiewicz (vib) and Nate McBride (b). Rec. 9 October 2010

When this Chicago-based trio first came together in 2005, the intention was to perform each other's compositions. Over the years they've developed away from prescribed structures and motifs, however, towards a free-improv approach to music making. The result on this debut release is 10 'Songs' (all the titles begin with the word 'Song', although the word is presumably deployed with ironic intent) in which the players avoid riffing off one another in any of the expected ways and instead

empathetically  
embroider  
a floating

dreamscape of chimes, scratches and skronks. No one provides an obvious beat: as one wise head has commented: 'The drummer-less trio invites stillness as its fourth member'. When Dave Rempis's sax is at its squawkiest and Jason Adasiewicz's vibes are at their most bell-like, the results suggest a fogbound harbour and a mysterious crewless ship ominously coming in to land. 'Song For' sets off like a piece of off-kilter cocktail-lounge balladry, which is then exploded by some splendid Aylerish blowing. It's clever, inwardly-turned stuff. Play it quietly at a dinner party so that it makes its assault on your guests' subconsciousnesses subliminally and they'll wake up the following morning feeling really spooked.

**Robert Shore**

## WorldService Project

### Fire in a Pet Shop

Megasound MSM025 | ★★★★★

Dave Morecroft (glock, kys), Tim Ower (s), Raphael Clarkson (tb), Conor Chaplin (el b) and Neil Blandford (d). Rec. April 2012

London quintet WorldService Project's debut album proper makes good on the promise shown by the handful of EPs they've already self-released, revealing a young band with a confident sense of self and a well developed, progressive musical mission.

But here's a hoary old riddle: is it jazz? Sure, there are brief bursts of improvisation – and Dave Morecroft's chunky electric piano coughs up some nice gobbets in particular – but, essentially, it's all about the compositions. Morecroft employs a technique that fans of Zappa and Zorn will be familiar with, stacking blocks of seemingly incongruous musical genres on top of each other for disorientating, often comical, effect. Tricky prog-funk time signatures, sudden bursts of metal riffage, tinny video game jingles, sudden disco bounce, a New Orleans marching band and over-excited circus music all jostle for pole position – executed with some impressive 'turn on a sixpence' group manoeuvres. It's good-natured stuff, crammed full of irreverence, youthful exuberance and even the odd animal impression. You might need a little lie down after you hear it. **Daniel Spicer**

## Short Cuts// New Releases

### Big Blue

Strange Wonder **Cam Jazz** | ★★★★★  
The vocalised trumpet solos of leader Jorma Kalevi Louhivuori make a strong impression on this young Finnish quartet's cool Euro-jazz set of originals.

### Oscar Brown Jr and Maggie Brown

We're Live **ESP-Disk** | ★★  
Old-fashioned entertainment from a father and daughter duo featuring the vocalese specialist's tributes to Bird and Lester Young among others, with a few of his later rarities included too.

### Arrigo Cappalletti Quintet

Hot Music **Leo** | ★★★★★  
A more conventional disc release than usual for the prolific Russia-via-Devon based label, this veteran Italian pianist's young quintet (featuring a Norwegian rhythm section) mix jazz tradition with laid-back Mediterranean folk music.

### Mattia Cigalini

Beyond **Cam Jazz** | ★  
A young Italian saxophonist-bandleader who sees the songs of Lady Gaga and Rihanna and the like as the new jazz standards with the emphasis on electric pop-fusion-y interpretations. And there lies the problem: they're not The Bad Plus.

### Jussi Fredriksson

Tidewaters **Fredriksson Music** | ★★★★★  
A young Finnish piano trio, featuring sax, with an energetic interaction that's as swayed by straight ahead swing as it is the Jarrett-Garbarek European Quartet.

### Satoko Fujii

Spring Storm **Delmark Libra** | ★★★★★  
A new trio for this exploratory Berlin-based pianist who rarely fails to deliver something interesting and invigorating. Here her trio is as blustery as any previous line up.

### Morten Haxholm Quartet

Equilibrium **Storyville** | ★★★★★  
This Danish bassist lines up a group of New York jazzers, including Jonathan Kreisberg and Ari Hoernig, and offers up a tasteful combination of guile and swing.

### Rakka Soutu

Lumpeela **Julkaisut** | ★★★★★  
This is great fun and played with real commitment; a Finnish sextet with an infectious sound combining such things as Ethio jazz, gospel, lounge psychedelia and spiritual jazz.

### Steven Lugerner

For We Have Heard **Primary Records** | ★★★★★  
Featuring the acclaimed maverick pianist Myra Melford, this US quartet is led by a multi-reedist taking inspiration for his absorbing compositions from the Book of Joshua in the *Old Testament*.

### Rob Mazurek Exploding Star Electro Acoustic Ensemble

The Space Between **Delmark** | ★★★★★  
An epic made-in-Chicago-where-else? Two-disc set of electro-acoustic music that crosses 1970s futurist moog records, Steve Reich, the more extreme otherworldly realms of Su Ra and ambient electric jazz.

### Mikrokolectyvi

Absent Minded **Delmark** | ★★★★★  
More creative Chicago-based eclecticism with Artur Majewski and Kuba Suchar, on trumpet and drums respectively, and an imaginative brew of samples, electronic groove, electric Miles and African influences all in the mix.

### Kit Packham's One Jump Ahead

One Foot in the Groove **Pelican** | ★★★★★  
"I'm a dinosaur looking back to another age," sings the Caterham-based Packham unapologetically in the opener and the CD title amusingly suggests the same. He doesn't dig, "music with those damn machines" and his bouncy R&B, jump and swing makes the same point.

### Mike Pride

Drummer's Corpse/ Birthing Days **AUM Fidelity** | ★★★★★  
Diverse simultaneous releases from an avant garde percussionist/neo-beat poet, from Brooklyn; the first includes a suite for avant percussion featuring Bobby Previte and Tyshawn Sorey and the more jazz-inspired *Birthing Days* has fiery saxophonist Jon Irabgon.

### Bastian Stein

Diegesis **Pirouet** | ★★★★★  
A lyrical young German quartet that benefits from this label's high standards in sound fidelity but alongside the quite striking pianist Pablo Held, the group interaction is also impressive.

### Swedish Mobilia / Luca Aquino

Did You Hear Something? **Leo** | ★★★★★  
An Italian guitar (Andreas Bolzoni) trio featuring Miles-influenced trumpeter Aquino as guest, in a more abstract, contemporary post-rock twist on seventies Miles.

### Marlene Ver Planck

Ballads... Mostly **Audiophile** | ★★★★★  
An accomplished veteran in the standards-singing business, and her generous, soothing vocal is backed by guests Houston Person and Jay Leonhart.

### Ben Wendel / Dan Tepfer

Small Constructions **Sunnyside** | ★★★★★  
A mostly beguiling duo album with Canadian saxophonist Ben Wendel, a member of the Grammy-nominated band Kneebody, partnering the New York-based pianist Dan Tepfer.

### Frank Wess

Magic 101 **IPO Recordings** | ★★★★★  
The ex-Basie reedsman is of a generation that's sadly now an endangered species. He was 89 in 2011 when this quartet set was recorded and alongside uber-elegant pianist Kenny Barron, sprinkles some living history on to a set of standards.

### Scott Willcox Big Band

Go For It! **Marquetry Records** | ★★★★★  
Some quietly accomplished outer-London jazz circuit players such as Chris Biscoe, Pete Hurt and Tony Woods take the solos on this veteran composer-arranger's cool big band charts. **Selwyn Harris**



Simon Thacker's Svava Kanti